Flare - 'busy trying to breathe'

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Flare - 'busy trying to breathe'

by reid_simp

Summary

Post-fall - Will survives and is saved by Chiyoh, who takes him to a hospital.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Will’s drowning. That he can tell. He wanted it to be a swift death, though he supposes he deserves the pain after all the trouble he’s caused. He doesn’t want to drag himself up to the surface, but there are hands on him, pulling him up. He tries to fight them off, but his arms are getting weak.

His head hurts. He thinks he hit it on something.

He breaks the surface of the water and has too much breath all at once. He chokes on the abundance of it. The hands are dragging him to shore, and he can’t protest it. On his back on the sand, he’s cold. If his brain was functioning as it should, it would tell him he’s lost too much blood, and hit his head, and was pretty close to drowning.

His head doesn’t tell him that, because he’s busy trying to breathe.

His blurry eyes almost focus on the face of Chiyoh above him. It’s not who he wanted it to be. Can't live with him, can’t live without him. Where the fuck is he? “Ch-” he can’t finish, breathing broken off into choking coughs. “Ww-” It feels like a panic attack, and some sort of stroke all rolled into one. Perhaps it is. He doesn’t know. “Haaa-” the call for Hannibal turns into a stunted scream as Chiyoh presses something on the wound in his chest and right shoulder. Fuck, he thinks. That shoulder’s been through plenty.

“I can’t find him, Will.” Will believes her because her voice chokes slightly at the end. She really can’t. “I looked for him first. No offence.” Will manages to scoff, then regrets it. “I couldn’t find him. I'm going to get you to a hospital, then I'm going back in.”

Will wishes he could find it in him to smile. Chiyoh, putting saving his own life above finding her brother. But fuck if this means what he thinks it does. Means Hannibal’s out there, drowned and bloated. He has to stop thinking about it soon enough because Chiyoh is hauling him into his arms and he has to focus on breathing and staying alive, trying to stay awake long enough to be sure Chiyoh isn’t going to lock him up like she did her lodger.

“No worry, Will. A friend of Hannibal is a friend of mine.” They both appreciate the joke, seeing as she’d shot him just 3 years before. Will would laugh, if he wasn’t so focused on the sharp breaths. She's trying to distract him, he knows. Make it easier to ignore the pain coursing through him. She’s taking him up the hill beside the cliff, an easy enough path making her way to her car. Before he knows it, the pain multiplies as he is being placed in her passenger seat. “Try not to bleed too much in my car.” Another joke, another distraction. She's being confident, but Will, even through the mist, can tell she’s deeply concerned, because the jokes don’t sound like jokes. They sound desperate.

She's driving far past whatever the limit must be, even faster than Hannibal had been on the way here. It takes a while for the countryside to give way to urban area, to give way to the streets of DC. She's frantically typing into a satnav the nearest hospital, and Will’s dizzy head is just about ready to give up. “Stay awake, Will.” She keeps forgetting about Hannibal, keeps saying things like “Hannibal is going to kill me.”

Will keeps forgetting, too. Losing track of time, eyes rolling back, only to snap back when he sees himself pulling Hannibal over the edge.

Then his eyes roll back again. They don't open again, no matter how hard he tries, and then he slips away.

Will wakes up to beeping all around him, and the closer he gets to the surface of consciousness, the louder and faster the beeping gets. "Will, calm down. Calm down. It's okay." Alana? No.... no, he thinks it's Molly. Could be anyone at this point. He manages to open his eyes after focusing on breathing through the weird things in his nose for a few minutes.

The figure of his wife greets him on the hospital chair next to his bed. He's propped up in the bed, and in his pyjamas. Molly must've told them how much he hates hospital gowns, how they itch and don't cover him nearly enough, how he likes to wear soft clothes like pyjamas when he's inside or in a bed like this.

Hannibal might be some sort of 'soulmate', but Molly is the person he's supposed to spend his life with.

Hannibal.

He tries not to think about that fact yet, because Molly is looking at him, crying, and holding his left hand which he can barely feel when he can see she's squeezing it.

"Ww... wa?" He can barely push words out in this state. Fuck knows what he's done to himself, pushing himself off a cliff in what can only be described as a romantic gesture.

"Jack's pieced it together, and I confirmed it. I don't care what the truth is; this is what happened. Dolarhyde broke Hannibal out of the transport car, then fled. Hannibal took you at gunpoint to the house, and before you could get the gun off him, Dolarhyde showed up. You both fought and killed him because otherwise he would have killed you, and then Hannibal took you both off the cliff. That's what happened, okay? That's all anyone will believe happened from now on." Molly isn't happy, clearly, with him, but she's here. That's what he cares about. She's here and he's in his pyjamas which tells him she isn't planning to leave as long as she knows he'll survive. She'll forgive him for losing himself to Hannibal again.

"Ch..."

"We are protecting Chiyoh because she's saved your life. Allowed her to return home to Lithuania." She pushes the words through her teeth, and he tries not to react. She pauses for a second. "Look, you've hurt yourself pretty bad. You had stab wounds in your right shoulder and cheek and cut yourself bad from the fall. You hit your head on some rocks when the waves pushed you around. You didn't have a stoke, but there was some bleeding in your brain that they had to deal with quickly. Chiyoh got you here just in time. It's why you're having some trouble speaking, but it's gonna be okay." She stops again, looks down at the coffee in her hands. "You were dehydrated, and your stomach was practically empty. You weren't looking after yourself.

Will wants to cry. Hannibal.

When Molly is done reassuring him it's okay, she reluctantly leaves, allowing Jack in.

"So," Jack begins. "It's a wonder you're alive." He pauses, sits down. "I'm glad, of course. You didn't deserve any of this. Not again." He seems to consider his next words, concerned what Will's reaction will be. Not that it'll stop him. "Hannibal is dead, or Chiyoh lied at the hospital. She said very little before she fled. She said Hannibal is dead." Stops again. "Is that true?"

"Mmmm..." He isn't certain, but Chiyoh wouldn't have given up and saved Will instead unless she was sure, and the crack in her voice haunts him.

Hannibal is dead.

End Notes

slowly dragging my way back up to date with whumptober!! day 14 isn't too bad when writing it on the 16th!

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